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AUTHOR Tierney, William G.
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ABSTRACT

How different institutions conceive of and construct knowledge is examined by delineating how they enact their conception of knowledge through curriculum. The contention of Burton Clark and others that disciplinary activity is primarily responsible for fomenting knowledge production is argued. It is suggested that institutions have a more powerful influence on how people define knowledge than previously thought. Knowledge is called a discourse constantly reconstructed over time and place. Three case studies ("Christian University," "Classics College," and "Cutting Edge College") show that institutions play a role in interpreting knowledge. Implications for institutional leaders are manifold since the ideological apparatus of the mission seems to play a more determined role than previously thought. The role of the faculty demands further analysis and reformulation. Pedagogical practices, teacher-student interaction, faculty-faculty interaction, and other cultural variables come into play by way of the participants' definition of knowledge. A way to think about reconceptualizing knowledge and the institution is to consider how faculty can create goals that reaffirm the unique nature of the educational process and their institutions. The discourse among faculty is related to how the institution creates, structures, and disseminates knowledge. One question that demands further analysis is what strategies organizational participants might use to offer students an understanding of their own relationship to the nature of knowledge. Contains 24 references. (SM)

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ACADEMIC WORK AND INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE: AN ANALYSIS

Paper presented at
Association for the Study of Higher Education
St. Louis, Missouri

William G. Tierney
Assistant Professor & Research Associate
Center for the Study of Higher Education
The Pennsylvania State University
133 Willard Building
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-6347

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ASHE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Texas A&M University
Department of Educational Administration
College Station, TX 77843
(409) 845-0393

This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, November 3-6, 1988. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

It is an early autumn morning and I am at Christian University (a pseudonym), a hundred year old urban institution with 3,000 students and 200 faculty. Christian is "on the move." The student body has expanded from a local to a regional clientele. Continuing education and a graduate school have been started and are doing quite well. The administration, faculty, and vast majority of the student body are evangelical Christian. A student explains:

> Being a Christian in a public high school was tough. People made fun of me. I very much wanted a college that was dedicated to a Christian way of life. People acknowledge God here, so I don't have to defend myself. It's allowed me to find the truth, rather than push me into the corner.

Consistently, throughout the institution people speak of Christianity as the central focus for what they do. The President refers to the mission as a "living document." A professor notes, "The university's first commitment is to truth within a broadly Christian framework. Everything we do must be devoted to that." A parent comments that he has sent his daughter to the college because, "I believe in the morals that the President espouses here." A philosophy professor relates, "A debate on abortion happened here recently, but it was unique. We had never thought to have a debate about it before. Everyone knows that's its wrong. Even the speaker for abortion didn't believe it, but took the position as a devil's advocate."

The interpretation of what Christian University is, and how the participants conceive of knowledge is changing. What it means to be a religious institution in the waning days of the twentieth century is no longer as clear as it once was. "I want us to be a first class Christian university," mentions one individual, "but I don't know what that means."

"Do we evangelize in the classroom or do we talk about business ethics and morals?" queries a business professor. A young humanities professor adds:

> I know that the way we see things is different. But how we come together as a faculty and define what's what is anyone's guess. I could teach at the (public) university in town. They offered me a job. I stayed here because we have a better chance of defining ourselves. I'm not just a humanities professor. I'm a Christian humanities professor at an institution that claims our faith defines what we do.

Christian University is one of seven institutions I studied during the academic year 1987-88. The Lilly Endowment provided the funds for me to investigate the curriculum in higher education from a cultural perspective. The seven institutions were public and private, single-sex and co-ed, four-year colleges and universities. I visited each institution twice for about a week at a time and utilized ethnographic techniques to gather the data. I worked from a critical framework of culture in analyzing the data (Lather, 1986; Simon & Dippo, 1986; Tierney, 1988). The works of Geertz, (1973, 1983) Foucault (1970, 1972, 1980) and Giroux (1983, 1988) have informed my thinking. In doing so, the perspective of this work differs from current assumptions about the production of knowledge.

My intent in this paper is two-fold. First, I will highlight how different institutions conceive of and construct knowledge. I will undertake the analysis by way of delineating how different institutions enact their conception of knowledge through the curriculum. My purpose is to disagree with Clark and others (Lodahl & Gordon, 1972; Beyer & Lodahl, 1976) who assert that disciplinary activity is primarily responsible for fomenting knowledge production. I suggest that institutions have a more powerful influence on how we define knowledge than we have previously thought. But my point is not simply to suggest that institutions cultivate the production of knowledge more so than the disciplines. The question of

which comes first in producing knowledge--the institutional chicken or the disciplinary egg--is mistaken. Rather, my second point is that knowledge is a discourse constantly reconstructed over time and place. As Geertz states, "The refiguration of social theory represents a sea change in our notion not so much of what knowledge is but of what it is we want to know" (1983, p. 34).

And the "sea change" occurs in a variety of locales, forms, and discourses. In addition to Christian University I will consider two additional institutions--Classics College and Cutting Edge College. Prior to hearing from the participants at these institutions, however, I will briefly discuss Clark's conception of academic work, and then contrast his view with my own.

The Generation of Knowledge--I

In Burton Clark's The Higher Education System he writes, "Despite the common tendency to overlook the importance of the disciplines, it can readily be seen as primary. ... The discipline rather than the institution tends to become the dominant force in the working lives of academics" (1983, p. 30). Tony Becher (1987) and Donald Light (1974), among others, subscribe to the notion that the disciplines define and advance knowledge. Light, for example, states "In the world of scholarship, the activities ... center on each discipline" (cited in Becher, 1987, p. 272).

A portrait of the generation of knowledge as dependent upon the discipline assumes that knowledge concerns the accumulation of facts developed around a common intellectual discourse. The subject matter of the discipline reflects natural categories that have developed over time. The emergence of specialized fields of knowledge derives from spin-offs that have gained academic legitimacy such as biochemistry from biology and

chemistry. From this perspective the intellectual expansion of fields has been viewed as what Lincoln calls "taxonomic and accretionary." She states, "We learn something and it is added to something else, and now we have two pieces of knowledge, pyramid style" (1986, p. 139). Simply stated, within a discipline people learn specific kinds of information that spawns a demand for a new discipline.

The implication for scholars is that they are more likely to have commonalities with individuals within their discipline than with other faculty at their institution. Becher comments, "If the nineteenth century still held out the promise of a common university culture, and with it perhaps a truly unified academic profession, the developments of the twentieth century progressively undermined that promise" (1987, p. 278). The assumption is that the department has emerged as the basic element of the university, and the discipline directs intellectual change. Consequently, the institution has emerged, in Clark's words, "as a holding company" (1983, p. 34). The norms, beliefs, myths, and work of academics takes place in the discipline.

Society intrudes on disciplinary knowledge when demands for particular kinds of services arise. However, such a line of thinking inquires about the extent to which the greater society helps foment activity within the discipline. That is, society's needs are answered by the discipline, not by the institution. Following Clark's line of thinking, Metzger (1987, p. 147) breaks disciplinary change into two branches. Substantive growth concerns the absorption of new subject matter within the discipline. Reactive growth occurs within the discipline because of a heightened demand for professional services.

The assumptions that guide this line of thinking are that the accumulation of knowledge is a scientific undertaking that has to be verified by a method based on replicability and predictability. In this light, scientists within a discipline have a shared idea of the underlying rationale and suppositions at work. As Keller states, "The world is assumed to be lawful, and the role of scientists is to discover these laws and explain how the world operates according to these laws (1986, p. 130). Objectivity is essential. Distinctions between natural or social science is necessary to the extent that a discipline can be assessed by its ability to meet the rigors of scientific validity. Thus, we use words such as "hard" and "pure" for the disciplines of chemistry and physics, and "soft" and "applied" for the less rigorous fields of study such as anthropology or education.

The Generation of Knowledge--II

Without disputing that the disciplines play a crucial role in the organization of academic work, I take exception to Clark's generalization. An alternative view is that the knowledge that disciplines produce is neither natural nor objective. Instead, what takes place within a discipline is a discourse constituted by the discipline and a variety of other social agencies. I start from the assumption that the production of knowledge is arbitrary and socially-constructed. However, the point is not that knowledge advances serendipitously. The manner in which disciplines define knowledge is constantly reinterpreted and redefined; a confluence of social institutions and forces combine to determine what accounts for knowledge at a particular moment in history. Rather than assuming that disciplines expand knowledge and discourse, I suggest we also consider how disciplines, institutions, and other social agencies limit discourse. As

Giroux notes, "To be part of a discipline means to ask certain questions, to use a particular set of terms, and to study a relatively narrow set of things (1983, p. 34).

And these questions, terms, and "narrow set of things" interact with institutional and faculty cultures. Knowledge is not something "out there" lying unconnected to a faculty member's experience and sense of self. Instead, the canon of what counts as knowledge concerns our assumptions about the nature of knowledge. In other words, the argument revolves around how different constituencies' discourses produce, receive, and interpret knowledge, instead of describing and accumulating knowledge. Giroux comments that the assumption that disciplines accumulate knowledge, "leaves the impression that a (discipline) has a permanent character and that specific structures can be described in an essentialist manner" (1988, p. 150). I am suggesting the opposite: disciplines are continuously reconstituted and constructed.

Rather than assume that knowledge is the disciplinary accumulation of a coherent frame of thinking, I consider knowledge as a social product with political consequences. Necessarily, I cannot investigate knowledge as decontextualized from the specific practices that surround its production. Zavarzadeh and Morton note such a notion enables:

> the student to see that his or her understanding of all of culture's texts (from philosophical treatises to popular television shows) is a result of situatedness in a complex network of gender, class, and race relations and to see that reading (and meaning) changes depending on whether the reader is a male or female reader, a Hispanic or white American reader, a working class reader or upper-class reader (1987, p. 19).

The question, then, is not how the disciplines produce knowledge, but how knowledge is conceived and used in many different contexts and situations. Of necessity, we must investigate the manifold institutions where

knowledge is located. In a superb book on the professionalization of literary studies Gerald Graff observes that it is a myth

> to think of institutions as if they were unmediated projections of the values, methods, and ideologies of major individuals. "Professionalization" and "academicization" are not neutral principles of organization, but agents that transform the culture, often to the point of subverting their original purpose. ... What goes in is not necessarily what comes out. (1987, p. 5).

To expand on these ideas, I turn to Classics College and Cutting Edge College and then return to Christian University.

Classics College

Although competition to get into Classics, an eight year-old college, is not terrifically competitive, the student body is considered one of the best in the country. Student enrollment is slightly over one thousand, the FTE faculty is around one hundred. Classics College has a long history of teaching "the classics." To many of the faculty the purpose of the institution has always been clear: "We believe we are an educational institution," mentions one long-time faculty, "and not a social hostel, or a training program to get along with people, or a 'how to' vocational school. We are dedicated to education." By education, the professor means that students must have a firm understanding and knowledge of Western civilization. A faculty member for many years at Classics says, "We teach people how to think. We haven't gone in for fads. We've stayed right because we're right."

The institutional culture of Classics reflects the disciplines. The President notes, "Departments are too strong. People's interests lie in the departments, in their specialty areas." A faculty member comments, "The place has been governed by a powerful educational ideology that is tied to change in the fields." A third person concurs: "I'm constantly reading in my area. I can't imagine trying to work across disciplines when there is so much happening in my own discipline." The picture arises, then, of an institution where the faculty culture of the institution mirrors the disciplinary cultu faculty member who has recently arrived and has teaching exper ce elsewhere shakes her head back and forth saying:

> I'm shocked at how very old fashioned notions exist. Greeks and Romans and Christians. I'm amazed there's such a slow process. I'm still astonished that the Symposium isn't taught. We are intellectually out of date. And we talk about interdisciplinary work, but it's a joke when I think about other places I've been.

Interdisciplinary coursework at Classics means that faculty from different disciplines give a lecture in the humanities core required of all students. "There's no synthesis going on," says a humanities professor. "There's no dialogue across the disciplines. One individual comes into class and does his thing, and then the next week another person comes in and does his thing." At Classics the departments are quite strong, and most innovation occurs with regard to the major. Little college-wide reform takes place. A senior faculty member offers, "We are extremely conservative. We were innovative fifty years ago, and haven't been ever since."

Given the faculty's disdain for "fads" many of the recent critics of higher education will find much to like at Classics. Alan Bloom, for example, comments, "I have heard the abandonment of requirements to learn

languages or philosophy or science lauded as a progress of openness. ... To be open to knowing, there are certain kinds of things one must know" (1987, p. 41). The assumption is that there is a unity to knowledge and one of the purposes of the curriculum is to provide the essential building blocks of knowledge so that people are free to think.

"That idea is absurd," states a dissident professor at Classics. "They're against 'isms,' which usually means feminism." In the words of Schuster and Van Dyne what is occurring at Classics is that faculty work from an "invisible paradigm" (1984) where knowledge is removed from the contexts in which it is situated. From this perspective the lives of women, people of color, and sexual minorities are marginalized and trivialized. The invisible paradigm exists as the sum of curricular offerings that serve as knowledge.

Recently we have seen changes whereby minority authors have been added to reading lists or a course has been offered to supplement the "regular" curriculum. Such additions have been attacked from two directions. On the one hand, people such as Alan Bloom find it spurious to include writers simply because of their color or gender; the quality and creativity of an individual's thinking is the hallmark for deciding whether to include his work in a syllabus. A senior professor at Classics concurs:

> Let's be realistic. There just weren't that many Black writers or women writers around in the past. It (slavery, injustice) was wrong. But that doesn't mean we add someone to the humanities core just because he's Black anymore than we should add someone because he's white.

On the other hand, many politically-active faculty resent the idea that adding "an author or two" will solve any of the problems about which they speak. "Everything remains the same," comments one professor at Classics. "We provide the same framework, the same values and practices.

The canon of what we know as knowledge may have been revised to include a new author, but the assumptions about the nature of knowledge remain the same." In other words, at Classics College to be knowledgeable in 1990 means essentially what it did fifty years ago except that a few different authors are on reading lists. The discipline guides the change of institutional knowledge. A science professor explains, "The nature of my discipline, the knowledge in it, is being developed so fast. We don't do interdisciplinary things here because just to keep up in my discipline is next to impossible."

Cutting Edge

Student enrollment at Cutting Edge College, barely a quarter of a century old, is a little over one thousand FTE, and faculty still hovers around ninety. The student body is bright and articulate, and drawn from throughout the country. Cutting Edge has a deserved reputation for being left-of-center, both politically and intellectually. The institution sits in an idyllic setting in a semi-rural environment. Interdisciplinary work is essential, and departmental boundaries are absent. Instead, the faculty exist in separate schools and act as cross-fertilizers for one another. At Cutting Edge it is more common to see an individual trained in English literature working and co-teaching with someone in economics or biology than to see three English faculty teaching a course. One individual comments:

> The curriculum is fragmented, purposefully so. People need to cut it up into different pieces, take knowledge apart and put it back together again. We want students to make the synthesis and connections for themselves. Somewhere after World War II it became impossible to think of all knowledge existing in one paradigm. We're in a different world now and we want to enable our students to grasp onto the power structures.

As with Christian University and Classics College, the culture of Cutting Edge has contributed to what the participants view as legitimate knowledge. "It's important for us to be cutting edge," says an administrator, pointing out a key precept. Institutional culture highlights particular pieces of knowledge which the participants seek to legitimate, and as importantly, subsumes other knowledge forms which remain hidden or discredited. One individual explains, "I put together a course and then one or two of my colleagues go over it. They really make me rethink it too! Sometimes I will drop in on someone's course just to pick up something people are doing that I don't know about." What makes the comment interesting is that the individuals he refers to are from areas other than his own; the courses he speaks of sitting in on are not in his discipline. An additional faculty member comments: "The ability to converse with people, to drop in on one another, is what makes Cutting Edge special." Another person confirms the interdisciplinary nature of the institution:

> The institution gives you the freedom and space and help to make connections across boundaries. Your concerns and interests affect you on a curricular level.

At Cutting Edge the culture of the discipline has been displaced and the culture of the institution has taken prominence. Note the difference between Classics College and Cutting Edge College with regard to how four faculty talk about the curriculum and their perceptions of knowledge in the following discussion at Cutting Edge.

Faculty #1: The disciplines give us no clues, no help whatsoever.

Faculty #2: If I published in my field, in the American Political Science Review, people around here would say, 'that's too bad!'

Faculty #3: I don't know what it would be like if we couldn't work with one another. The reward is in the ability to work with other faculty.

Faculty #4: There's a collegiality that's forced on you. Sure, we fight and yell, just like a family. But I'm stunned at how many people are alienated elsewhere.

Faculty #3: The collegiality is just great. I went to a women's studies dinner the other night. I wouldn't do that if I were at another place.

Faculty #1: You need an intellectual center of gravity to create a curriculum, and people have relied on the disciplines for that, but the disciplines are dead.

Faculty #2: To some extent, we create our own cutting edge.

Faculty #4: I hope in the future we work out a few more coherent courses of study. Feminist Studies, Law ...

Faculty #3: Cultural Studies.

Faculty #4: More on the third world, gender.

Faculty #1: But the faculty will continue to drive the change. Encouragement can come from the administration, but not the decisions. What's good is that they encourage, foster change.

The discussion exemplifies other conversations that take place at Cutting Edge. One of the points that is of interest in the discussion is the perceptions the faculty have about their institution. Perhaps they are not unlike faculty at other institutions. For example, it is conceivable that speaker #3 would go to a women's studies dinner if she were at another institution even though she says she would not. Speaker #2 has found alienated faculty elsewhere, but certainly other faculty work at institutions where they are not alienated and they have a radically different view of knowledge--Christian University comes to mind. And surely speaker #1's comment about the administration fostering change could be said at many other campuses. Yet the faculty at Cutting Edge speak proudly, as if they are unique--in part because they are--but also because the culture of the institution provides an identity whereby they come to define the parameters of knowledge, and of consequence, who they are.

A new faculty member at Cutting Edge speaks about the difficulty that occurs with this curricular approach to knowledge by talking about her teaching:

> We call it 'mode of inquiry' because we don't lecture, we want discussion. In general I like it, but I worry sometimes that they're missing something. I think my students should know about the Licensing Act of 1737, but how do I get that across?

Presumably the speaker's concern is not only that students learn about a law concerning the theater, but also about other information as well. Her concern is similar to that of the science professor at Classics: What do students need to know? The difference in curricular formulas between Classics and Cutting Edge is that Classics assumes certain data exist that all well-educated people must know, whereas Cutting Edge denies the assumption that knowledge is ever neutral. Furthermore, Classics College assumes that until one masters particular information one will not be able to think independently; the outcome of an education is the ability to think. Conversely, Cutting Edge College assumes that mastery of knowledge is a subjective undertaking that must be understood as a political undertaking; critical inquiry is the subject of learning.

Pieces of the knowledge puzzle begin to fit together. We hear the inherent differences among the three institutions. At Classics the institution encourages students to objectify knowledge and see if they can make sense of it. Knowledge is objective and students are made to think about how they can best understand it. Because of the knowledge explosion within each discipline there is much emphasis on disciplinary rigor. Students are not taught to see themselves as part of the process which they study. Whether knowledge is referentially linked to a student's life is not considered important.

At Cutting Edge College people acknowledge that students can graduate from the institution without having been brought into contact with certain disciplines or certain facts. A professor states, "Does it bother me that a student can graduate without enough course work in the sciences, or that a kid might not have dabbled enough in the quantitative area? To be honest with you, yeah, it bothers me. Should we do anything about it, such as change requirements, absolutely not." Other faculty at Cutting Edge concur. Comments one: "We have a philosophical stance about knowledge. It's explicit, clear." Cutting Edge College tries to make students see how what is being taught impacts on their lives.

Christian University used to have a quite clear conception of knowledge as based on the basic tenets of their faith. Although the clarity has blurred a bit, the institution still has the clearest view of knowledge of the three. Knowledge is ideologically linked to and determined by the underpinnings of the faith of the participants. The challenge for students is to come to terms with their faith by understanding it as a moral imperative.

Discussion

My purpose in discussing these three case studies returns me to the underlying thesis of this paper. Paraphrasing Geertz (1983, p. 68), at this point in time calling someone an English professor is like calling someone a San Franciscan: it classifies the person but it does not type the individual: it places the person without portraying the individual. And we have little understanding of how the English professor views or constructs knowledge. Think about the ways the three institutions construct their versions of what counts for knowledge.

The faculty member at Christian University sees himself as a Christian humanities professor. The religious life of the institution frames some courses and knowledge forms as taboo. The biology department does not take up conversations about abortion, or for that matter, evolution. At Classics College a faculty member defines knowledge from within the confines of the discipline. The culture of the institution overlays a view of knowledge as if it is defined by the discipline. At Cutting Edge College the faculty eschew the discipline; remember the faculty member who disdains writing in a disciplinary journal, or the other individual who talks about how knowledge needs to be constantly "cut up" and put together in different forms and shapes.

Similarities among the institutions also exist. At Classics College and Cutting Edge College vocational skills are not equated with knowledge. Students do not gain a hold of knowledge that prepares them for the world of work. Instead, the institutions ostensibly provide students with an introduction to an understanding of how systems operate, rather than specific technical knowledge. Interestingly, Cutting Edge College and Christian University are alike in the direction they provide for organizational participants. "A conservative, macho economist wouldn't make it here," comments a long time faculty member at Cutting Edge. Presumably the professor objects not because the individual is an economist or male but because "conservative" and "macho" are words that run counter to the ethos of the institution. Similarly, a radical feminist will not be found teaching at Christian University. The "conservative, macho" economist or the radical feminist have conceptions of knowledge that are at odds with the ideology of the institutions.

If these case studies show that institutions in some way play a role in interpreting knowledge, then the second point of this paper comes into focus. Knowledge is a social construct constantly undergoing interpretation and change on a variety of different levels and in a variety of social contexts. By pointing out the fragmentation that exists about what counts as knowledge I run the risk of painting a relativistic portrait of institutions and knowledge. As Geertz observes:

> The view that thought is where you find it, that you find it in all sorts of cultural shapes and social sizes ... is somehow taken to be a claim that there is nothing to say except when in Rome, to each his own ... But there is a great deal more to say (1983, p. 154).

I agree. Listen again to Geertz:

> (An understanding of) the radical variousness of the way we think now ... will extend our perceptions beyond the merely professional realms of subject matter, method, technique, scholarly tradition and the like, to the larger framework of our moral existence (1983, p. 161).

The implications of what I am suggesting for institutional leaders are manifold. For example, the ideological apparatus of the mission seems to play a more determined role than previously thought. At one time we believed only those institutions with sagas (Clark, 1980) provided guidelines from which participants found meaning and identity. I am suggesting that institutional ideology goes much further; even in institutions where a clearly delineated saga is not apparent the strength of what the mission says or does not say helps define the parameters for action and discourse and how knowledge gets defined.

The role of the faculty at their institutions also demands further analysis and reformulation. As Giroux notes, "The intellectual is more than a person of letters, or a producer and transmitter of ideas. Intellectuals are also mediators, legitimators, and producers of ideas and

social practices; they perform a function eminently political in nature" (1988, p. 151). That is, the nature of relationships that take place within an institution both are constituted by and transform the participants' view of knowledge.

Pedagogical practices, teacher-student interaction, faculty-faculty interaction and a host of other cultural variables come into play by way of the participants' definition of knowledge. Think of Cutting Edge College where a cultural more is that faculty work with one another across disciplines. Contrast Cutting Edge with Classics College where the psychology department is not on speaking terms with the natural science division because the natural scientists define the knowledge that resides in the discipline of psychology as beneath them. Recall the parent and student at Christian University who come to the institution because they view teaching and learning as a form for receiving established truths that the faculty possess. We begin to see, then, how the discourses produced about knowledge locate specific social practices and relations, and how such discussions ultimately link up to a relationship between ideology and culture.

Forms of decision-making and the structures with which the participants go about their work also vary given the nature of the formation and construction of knowledge. The fragmentation of disciplines at Classics has created a bureaucratic structure that Veysey commented on when he said, "Bureaucratic administration was the structural device which made possible the new epoch of institutional empire-building without recourse to specific shared values" (1970, p. 315). Conversely, many would view the decision-making structure at Cutting Edge College as something devised by an academic Rube Goldberg--a cumbersome contraption. Yet the decision-making apparatus at Cutting Edge apparently works because it is another reflection

of the culture of the institution. I am not saying that decision-making structures are inconsequential. However, as we have seen in these three institutions, structures only reflect the institution's culture; they do not reside outside of it.

Those who argue that the fragmentation of knowledge has occurred seem correct, yet given what I have uncovered at these institutions it is difficult for me to believe that a grand synthesis will take place. Or, for that matter, do I long for such a synthesis. Instead, I am trying to develop our sensitivity to the cultural aspects of both the organization and of knowledge. Once we understand how the operations and perceptions of culture work in an organization, once we accept that an institution's mission is more than a tool for goal consensus, and the curriculum is more than a device for enriching students with a static conception of knowledge, it will become possible to critically examine the organizational formations that have constrained action by not allowing us to imagine alternative ways of conceptualizing one's ideological status.

One way to think about reconceptualizing knowledge, and hence the institution, is to consider how faculty can create goals which reaffirm the unique nature of the educational process and their institutions. I am referring to a faculty's ability to exercise forms of intellectual and pedagogic practices that try to locate the processes of knowledge directly into a cultural sphere by arguing that their view of knowledge represents a struggle over ideology, and necessarily, power relations. Giroux notes, "Human beings not only make history, they also make the constraints; and needless to say, they also unmake them. It needs to be remembered that power is both an enabling as well as a constraining force" (1983, p. 38). Simply stated, institutional ideologies do not change by decree; they are

debated and fought over either implicitly or explicitly. The parameters of the debate, those whose voices are heard and those whose voices are silent, are the first volleys of the argument. External actors such as Bloom Bennett also help frame the nature of the argument to which organizational participants react. In this light, the discourse created amongst faculty is directly related to how the institution creates, structures and disseminates knowledge.

Conclusion

Foucault comments:

> Education may well be ... the instrument whereby every individual ... can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle lines of social conflict. Every education system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse (Foucault, 1972).

The implications of Foucault's comment are that knowledge is directly linked to power. Rather than neutral, knowledge is a cultural construct that helps determine relations of power. As opposed to some writers who use culture as a metaphor--an organization is like a culture; I have used it as a synonym--an organization is a culture. A culture has an ideology that helps determine both how power exists in the organization and how concepts of authority and knowledge get played out. The central point is that organizational participants construct their reality, and in doing so, also construct what counts for knowledge. In turn, individuals are both subjects and objects who are created by and create their culture. Given the assumption that individuals have the capability to transform their reality, one question that demands further analysis is what strategies organizational participants might use to provide students with an understanding of their own relationship to the nature of knowledge.

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